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INDIANA COLLECTION  
HAMMOND PUBLIC  
LIBRARY



Hammond Public Library:  
*A History*

BY

*Florence E. Allman*

*HAMMOND, INDIANA*

LAKE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
REFERENCE SERVICES

THE HAMMOND PUBLIC LIBRARY: A HISTORY

By

Florence E. Allman

(Chapter XI. by E.B. Hayward)

Hammond, Indiana  
1969

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## Chapter I.

### BEGINNINGS

The Hammond Public Library had its roots in a study club called the Shakespeare Club, which felt the need of a library and was willing to do something about it. Mrs. E.S. Cooper who was a member of the Library Board from 1935 to 1943, says that the name Shakespeare Club was given to them partly in derision by some of their former schoolmates because they met to discuss serious literature. They also had theatre parties and other social affairs not always of such a serious nature.

The members of this club as listed in the corner stone papers were:

Rena Ames, President; Capitola McClair, Vice President; Gertrude Fetterly, Secretary; Lula Bloomhuff, Jessie Cole, Mabel Colf, Texa Goetzman, Elizabeth Jordon, Katherine Parker, Belle Bloomhuff, Jennie Mabbs, Ara Hersman, Sylvia McClair, Marie Robellay, Idabelle Daugherty, Nettie Corbett, and Lizzie Digman.

When this group met on June 16, 1902, in the office of the Superintendent of Schools, the first Board of Trustees was legally organized. Dr. W.F. Howat, who had been very active in bringing about this organization, was named President and had the following officers as his assistants: Mrs. J.G. Ibach, Vice-President, and Miss Rena Ames, Secretary. Other members of this first library board were Dr. Eleanor Scull, Dr. W. Burton, Mayor Lawrence Becker, Dr. Thomas Kohr, and A. Murray Turner.

As a very modest beginning a "Library Corner" in the Millinery Parlor of Bloomhoff & Co. was opened with a nucleus collection of books purchased from the Shakespeare Club for \$360.00. The sum of \$20.00 a month paid the rent and the services of a part-time librarian. By January 1, 1904, the library had grown in favor and usefulness to the point where it was necessary to enlarge its facilities, so a room of its own was obtained in the Chicago Telephone Building on Rimbach Avenue for \$10.00 a month, with Miss Marie Hansen as its first full-time



librarian. Hours at that time were 9 to 9 each week-day and 2 to 5 on Sunday. Miss Hansen was chosen against a field of several other applicants and received a salary of \$40.00 a month. Her first assistant, Miss Minnie Turner, was paid the large sum of \$2.00 a week, but by 1907 the board decided that this salary should be increased to \$3.00 a week.

The early minutes of the Hammond Public Library reveal an appealing glimpse of the nature of the public library of that time. The individual members were obviously cultured and influential citizens able on one occasion to obtain the offer of a choice of sites for the proposed new library building in what is now the heart of Hammond's business district. Much of the business of the monthly meetings consisted of questions relating to the value to the library of particular books, magazines and sets of reference books. A donation by Dr. Elbright of Guizot's HISTORY OF FRANCE was duly noted. Mr. Becker moved that a list of books recommended by Mr. Turner be accepted. Mrs. Ibach moved that Dr. Scull order Grote's HISTORY OF GREECE. From these and similar entries it seems clear that the people who started the library thought of it as a means of sharing their own treasured volumes with each other and with their neighbors. They also believed it to be part of their obligation to recommend the individual titles to be purchased and felt qualified to do so. These examples from what appears in retrospect to have been a simpler more leisurely age illustrate the place the library held in the academic and in the civil community.

About 1904 Andrew Carnegie of Pittsburgh began to distribute his huge fortune for the benefit of society, one of his benefactions being for library buildings. "Is there any reason," asked Mr. A.M. Turner, "why Hammond, Indiana, should not be eligible for help from Mr. Carnegie?" The board agreed that he should make the proper contacts, the petition was granted, and Mr. Turner was appointed Chairman of the Site Committee and later of the Building Committee.

Much credit is due him for his foresight and untiring efforts to obtain a building that would be a cultural asset to the young city of Hammond.

Three sites were considered: one offered by Thomas Hammond at the corner of Hohman and Clinton, another by W.H. Hammond on South Hohman, and the third offered by the City Council in Central Park, located between Truman and Michigan Streets at Hohman Ave. The latter site was chosen, and \$25,000 was donated by Mr. Carnegie for the erection of the building, with the stipulation that the city government be responsible for maintaining it and the book collection. The next year, upon request, he donated \$2,000 more, provided the city would increase its support from \$2,500 to \$2,700 a year.

In a little less than a year, from July 25, 1904, to July 8, 1905, the structure was completed, with J.T. Hutton as the architect and J.W. Reed the general contractor. It was built of Ohio Sandstone from Amherst, Ohio. The building consisted of two floors and a basement, the first floor accommodating both the adult and the children's collections, the second floor being designated for club meetings, and the basement housing the heating plant and janitorial equipment in addition to a large room set aside for a "men's club room."

Meanwhile the book collection of the library was being augmented by both cash and gifts of books. At one time W.B. Conkey gave 407 new books. Dr. Howat gave 100 new books as a memorial to his daughter, Mary. Substantial cash gifts were received from the old Shakespeare Club when it disbanded, also from Mr. M. Rothschild, the Episcopal Church, Thomas Hammond, A.M. Turner, and the Hammond Woman's Club.



## Chapter II.

### DEDICATION OF THE FIRST LIBRARY BUILDING, 1905

July 8, 1905, must have been one of the greatest days Hammond had yet observed, for it was the day of the dedication of the library building. From a newspaper article we get the feeling of the excitement, pleasure, and pride felt by the citizens who participated and the following is quoted from the Lake County News for Thursday, July 13, 1905.

"The Andrew Carnegie library is dedicated and now belongs to the citizens of Hammond. The service began Saturday afternoon at 3 o'clock when citizens of the town and many visiting friends flocked to the beautiful edifice. Here a committee of ladies, appointed by the board, received.

"Directly facing the entrance is the receiving and distributing desk, and on this was placed a great bunch of American Beauties. To the right is a sunny south room which is to be the children's reading room. Directly across the hall on the north is the reading room for adults. In the large room to the east is the library itself, and, opening off from it, is a cozy little den which will be the sanctum of the librarian. On the second floor is a spacious auditorium in the front, from which small committee rooms open.

"The ladies receiving were most attentive in showing to the guests the simple beauty of the building. The personnel of the committee were: Mrs. M.M. Towle, Mrs. F.R. Mott, Mrs. A.F. Knotts, Mrs. Patrick Reilley, Mrs. Lawrence Becker, Mrs. Mary Holm, Mrs. J. G. Ibach, Mrs. W.F. Howat, Mrs. T.W. Kohr, Dr. Eleanor Scull, Mrs. Thomas Hammond, Mrs. J.T. Hutton, Mrs. J.W. Reed, Mrs. W.F. Brunt, Mrs. Nicholas Emmerling, Miss Marie Hansen.

"In the evening large numbers of the townspeople filled Towle's opera house which was hung throughout with red, white, and blue in honor of the dedicatory services. Among those who occupied boxes were Architect J.T. Hutton, who drew the plans for the building, Contractor J.W. Reed, who built the structure, Judge W.C. McMahan of the circuit court, Attorney Peter Crumpacker, John W. Dyer, and Senator W.H. Gostlin. Dr. W.F. Howat, president of the library board, was chairman of the occasion, and seated with him on the stage were Hon. Lawrence Becker, mayor of Hammond, Mrs. J.G. Ibach, Dr. Eleanor Scull, Dr. Thomas Kohr, and Mrs. N. Emmerling of the library committee, A. Murray Turner, chairman of the building committee, Revs. C.J. Sharp and Chas. Smith, who assisted in the services, and Hon. Edgar D. Crumpacker, who made the address of the evening.

"Mr. Turner gave the first address of the occasion which was a report of the building committee. He showed the disposition of the \$25,000 given for the purpose by Mr. Carnegie as follows: Contractor for building: \$21,000, W.F. Brunt for heating: \$1,800, Incidentals and architect's fees: \$2,100.



"Mr. Turner as well as the other speakers of the evening spoke highly of Mr. Carnegie and jokingly said the money was not so tainted but what we would willingly accept more of it. He spoke in high praise of both Mr. Hutton, architect, and Mr. Reed, contractor, for the beauty and skill of plans of the building and the splendid work and integrity which marked its construction.

"The structure stands for the betterment of Hammond and will stand as a pleasure and profit to coming generations. He spoke especially of the club room for men in the basement of the library and expressed the hope that the common people would use it and all the advantages of the library for their good. The spring of the entrance door is sensitive to the slightest touch - its latch always responsive to the humblest and most timid.

"Dr. Howat, in behalf of the library board, then spoke in appreciation of the work of the building committee who had kept inviolate the trust imposed upon them. Dr. Howat fittingly placed the credit for the origin of the idea of a library with the Shakespeare Club. The whole history has been one of steady growth from the nucleus which the teachers made.

"At that time the library contained 300 books and was used by 100 members; now there are over 3,000 books, and they are used by over 1,100 who hold cards in the library. In closing he spoke of the aim of the library and the need of generosity on the part of citizens to buy new books.

"The library was formally presented by him to Mayor Becker for the people of Hammond, and he gave a most appropriate response. "We are getting more for \$25,000 in this building than for a like sum in any other public building in Lake County. The library is of value to boys who must work and cannot attend school and is an opportunity to gain self-made education. The city had shown an advancement in intellectuality in that they no further catered to records of prize fighters who do not enter the columns of decent literature!

"At 9:30 Chairman Howat introduced Congressman Crumpacker who opened his address by saying that 'The library is only an additional monument to the enterprise of a hustling, wide-awake town. Thirty years ago Hammond was a pork-packing center. Since then came the period of adolescence with little time for the refined aspect of municipal growth. The library is the best assurance that we have grown out of commercialism into intellectuality.'"

The account concludes with this paragraph: "The music of the evening was highly deserving of praise. The East Chicago quartette rendered an enjoyable comic selection and also assisted Miss Ida Griffin in singing 'My Father's Flag and Mine.' Miss Griffin herself and Barney Young and his orchestra are too deservedly popular here to need additional praise. Many highly complimentary expressions were heard both of the gifted singer and the popular band man. The day was a glorious one, and those who have worked so faithfully for the noble cause and who deserve so greatly the especial thanks of the city for its successful completion could not but be pleased with the events which turned over so auspiciously to the city the Andrew Carnegie library." Individual pictures of most of the participants in this program are included in the newspaper article.



### Chapter III.

#### EARLY YEARS

One of the conditions of the gift was that the city should maintain the library by an annual cash appropriation, not less than \$2,500 at the start, and this the city has faithfully done through the years. The tax rate has varied from 4 cents per \$100 valuation to 32 cents in 1969. The operating expenditures for 1969 amounted to \$533,514. From its modest book stock of 832 in 1904, a registration of 522 borrowers, and a circulation of 4,872, the library has steadily grown in usefulness; the figures for 1964 were 227,904 in the book stock, 44,635 registered borrowers, and a circulation of books and non-book materials of 1,229,535. When the library observed its silver anniversary in 1930, the book collection had reached 70,000, and a local newspaper article called it "one of the community's greatest assets."

Some items found in the early minutes of board meetings seem amusing to us today; for example, there was a rule that applicants for library cards and their guarantors had to be passed on by board members. At first each name was brought up vote and included in the minutes. This proved to be rather time-consuming, so later, as the number of borrowers grew, a committee report was just accepted. Another rule was that each child was allowed one book a week and that to be borrowed on Friday or Saturday only. Also the board voted that "the use of tobacco, and all conversation and other conduct not consistent with the quiet and orderly use of the Reading Room is prohibited."

## Chapter IV.

### CHIEF LIBRARIANS, 1904-1968

Marie Hansen continued as librarian until September 30, 1906, when she resigned to enter the first class of the Wisconsin Library School at Madison. Then she rejoined the staff as Mrs. Howard B. Easter on Dec. 7, 1919, and was in charge of adult services at the Main Library until Dec. 27, 1931, at which time she became the librarian of the new Hansen Branch in Hessville named in her honor. She remained on the staff until her retirement in May 1947, thus becoming the first employee to retire under the new Public Employees Retirement Fund of Indiana.

Mrs. Jeanie L. Sawyer succeeded Miss Hansen on Oct. 1, 1906, and continued as chief librarian until Dec. 31, 1924. In April 1908 she was granted a 6-weeks leave of absence at full pay to attend library school at Earlham College, and her substitute received \$6.00 a week. One of Mrs. Sawyer's projects was a printed library catalog for which the contract was let to the W.B. Conkey Co. in 1911. Every school teacher in Hammond received one. It was during Mrs. Sawyer's regime that the second library-owned building, the Keeler Branch, was erected.

The chief librarians since 1924 have all been men who were recruited from other library positions. Orlando C. Davis came Jan. 1, 1925, from East Chicago, where he had been chief librarian for a short time after holding the same position at Waltham, Mass. But he preferred the Eastern United States and left Hammond on May 30, 1926, to become chief librarian at Bridgeport, Conn. Then in 1934 he moved to the Boston Public Library to head their adult services. Now retired, he is living in Clearwater, Florida.

Mr. Davis was succeeded by Albert R. Nichols who came from Providence, R.I., on June 16, 1926, and returned to the East in December 1928.



His successor, James A. Howard, came to Hammond on Jan. 1, 1929, from St. Louis where he had worked in the reference department while attending classes in the St. Louis Library School during 1927-28. The enthusiasm of Mr. Howard for library work brought about many innovations, most of which have continued to this day. Probably the most important of these was the introduction of an intra-library loan system whereby deliveries and pick-ups to all agencies are made three times a week. The privilege patrons have of borrowing material from any agency and returning it to any one of them is a great convenience. Mr. Howard's sudden death on April 28, 1954, ended 25 years of useful service both to the library and to the community.

Edward B. Hayward took over the reins on Aug. 1, 1954, with fine qualifications for Chief Librarian. After receiving A.B. and M.A. degrees from Middlebury College in Vermont, he received a graduate degree in Library Science from the University of Illinois. He came to Hammond from the library at Racine, Wisconsin, having had previous experience at the Akron (Ohio) Public Library. Mr. Hayward is now active in Indiana library affairs and in the community. He served as President of the Indiana Library Association in 1966 and President of the Hammond Historical Society in 1962.

## Chapter V.

### BRANCH LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

The Hammond library system has had a steady growth which necessitated branching out to different parts of the city. By 1911 the use of the library had grown to such an extent that it seemed advisable to establish deposit stations in outlying districts, the first one being located in the Gibson Y.M.C.A. with library privileges for all residents of Gibson. This station was continued for many years. Meager records show that there were deposits of books also in the J.A. Aubry, Keitzer, and Dwyer stores at later dates. In 1929 a

deposit of books was placed in the home of Mrs. L.P. Feltzer, 1047 Harrison Ave., and six months later it was necessary to seek larger quarters in the Bourne Department Store at 221 Conkey St. At that time the collection was named the Wallace Branch, which flourished for a while but had to be discontinued because the space was no longer available. Later, service was begun to all city fire departments, to St. Margaret Hospital, and to Northern Indiana Public Service Co. which still have deposits of books and deliveries of requests. Parramore Hospital at Crown Point also receives books from the Hammond Library.

The first real branch to be established was opened in Sept. 1911 in the Robertsdale section of Hammond in rented quarters, possibly above the old fire station on Indianapolis Boulevard. The first name given in was "Branch #1." At a later date, when it was moved to the West Park School, the name was changed to West Park and soon 142 borrowers were registered. Some time after that it was re-named the Robertsdale Branch when it occupied a rented store room on 119th St. and Superior. In 1931, when its own new building at 847-117th St. was occupied, it was designated the Rupp Branch, honoring Ralph G. Rupp, a member and officer of the library board from March 1919 to November 1954.

The next branch to be contracted for was in the Industrial High School (now Hammond High) on Calumet Ave., an agreement being made with the School City of Hammond that the hours should be 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day except Sunday and legal holidays. This was in September 1917, and the service continued for several years.

The Brooks House Branch in the community center at 1047 Conkey St. was opened in 1919 and continued to function there until November 1964 when that part of the building was condemned and the library was moved into temporary quarters at 1104 Ames St. pending the renovation of the Brooks House of Christian Service. The dedication of the newly equipped and enlarged quarters was held on May 22, 1966.



In May 1921 the board decided to establish a branch in the basement of the Christian Church on Calumet Ave. with Mrs. Ethel Seitz in charge. She moved with it in 1930 to a room in the State Bank of Hammond on Calumet Ave., remaining there until she retired in July 1952. In 1953, when space in the bank building was no longer available and no other suitable location could be found, this library agency had to be closed, much to the regret of its patrons.

1923 and 1924 saw the planning and completion of the first branch building owned by the library. The site at Oak Ave. and Hoffman St. was purchased for \$2,000, and on Dec. 16, 1924, the building, erected at a cost of \$27,500, was dedicated as the Keeler Branch (for John V. Keeler, President of the Board and a resident of that neighborhood). Miss Ruth Young, later Mrs. Garland Smith, was the first librarian there and remained until she was transferred to the position of children's librarian at the Main Library.

The growth of Hammond, east, north, and south soon demanded library service in those areas, so in May 1927 a bond issue of \$110,000 was authorized for the purchase of land and the erection of three new buildings, and for other expenditures on property already owned. In April 1931 a bond issue of \$60,000 was authorized to complete the buildings which were opened that year. These were the Hansen Branch at 2823 Martha St., replacing rented quarters at Kennedy Ave. and 15th St. where a library had been established in 1927, Gladys Zyp, now Mrs. Ben Ratke, being the first librarian there; the Rupp Branch at 847-117th St. with Louise Ramsey in charge; and the Sawyer Branch on Hammond's south side at 649 Mulberry St. This was named for Mrs. Jeanie L. Sawyer, and Louise (Mrs. Charles) Simmons became the first librarian. L. Cosby Bernard, Sr., was the architect for these attractive English-style neighborhood libraries.

In 1943, when the Hammond Board of Education offered a large room for library purposes in the basement of their administration building at the corner of Hohman Ave. and Waltham St., the idea for another branch was formed, and in

April 1945 the Harrison Park Branch was launched with an open house. Carol (Mrs. William) Burris and Leone (Mrs. Gene) Morrison were placed in charge of adult services, and Alma (Mrs. Carl) Meyer headed the children's room and the School Department. In addition to the usual services for adults and children, this branch housed the School Department, which had originally been on the third floor of the main building and later in the basement of Keeler Branch. This department (now called Classroom Library Service) distributes rotating collections of books to classrooms in the public and parochial schools of the city. In the summer of 1965, when the School Board found it necessary to take over this space, the branch was moved to a rented building at 436 Conkey St.

Another cooperative venture with the Board of Education was first proposed in 1952 by L.L. Caldwell, Superintendent of Schools, when plans were being made for four new elementary buildings. The Library Board asked that a room be designated on the ground floor of each of these for a public library for the use of both adults and children. Thus came about the addition of four school branches to the Hammond library system. Wilson, at 1317-173rd St., the first to be ready, held its open house on May 13, 1954. The nucleus of books for this collection came from what had been the Columbia Center Branch in the public housing development across the street from the school, and Mrs. Ruth Roberts moved with the books to be first librarian at Wilson.

Next to be opened was Riley at 1245 River Drive in September 1954 with Mrs. Gaylon Goodlander in charge. January 1956 found the library in Jefferson School, 6940 Northcote Ave., ready for business with Elise (Mrs. Robert) Duncan behind the circulation desk, and in October of the same year Lafayette Branch, 5512 Maywood, became a reality with Carol Greb as librarian. A fifth school branch, for which space was arranged in an old building, was the Lincoln Branch, 4221 Towle Ave., opened in September 1954. Mrs. Grace Westerhoff was the first librarian.



## Chapter VI.

### GROWTH AND CHANGES IN SERVICES OFFERED

Through the years many changes took place in the old Carnegie building, and each change represented a need for expansion. Long ago, in 1916, the second floor designated for club meetings lost that identity and became the children's room. The "men's club room" in the basement was turned into quarters for the catalog department where all new books were processed ready for use. When oil heating replaced the old coal-burning furnace, the former coal bin was transformed into a kitchen and "lounge" for the use of the staff. In 1927 a mezzanine floor for stacks was added on the east side to accommodate the fast-growing collection of books. By 1950 parking for automobiles had become a problem, so, with permission from the Park Board, a much appreciated parking lot was made east of the building.

Many additions were made in the services offered. Non-residents were extended the privileges of the library upon payment of a fee. Non-resident students enrolled in schools within the Hammond boundaries may receive borrowers' cards free of charge.

In 1948 an agreement with the Hammond Times brought about the microfilming of that newspaper and its predecessors, the Lake County News and the Lake County Times, providing local history dating back to June 8, 1893. This file is kept up-to-date and may be read on the film reader. Early census reports and some issues of the New York Times are available also in this form.

Long-playing phonograph records were added to the collection of materials at Main in 1955, and 16 millimeter sound films have been available since September 1959 when Hammond joined the Indiana Library Film Circuit, a cooperative project furnishing the library with about 16 films a month.

Copying service is offered by the use of a copying machine which duplicates

library material for a nominal fee per page. A larger selection of new adult books has been possible since February 1957 through the rental of recent books from the American Lending Library in Atlanta, Ga.

Recently, through federal aid to libraries, a teletype machine has been installed providing quick service from the State Library and about twenty others in the state.

## Chapter VII.

### DEPRESSION YEARS

A period which is now like a bad dream, the Depression which began in 1932, forced the library in December 1932 to economize on heat and light by closing every day at 6 P. M. The library revenue had been cut more than half for 1933 over 1932. By the following May, because of daylight saving time, it was possible to increase the hours on three days to 8 P. M. Salaries of staff members were cut over 30% and branch telephones were removed, but the staff continued to give the best service possible and were busier than ever because widespread unemployment brought more users to the libraries. An article in the Hammond Times for June 30, 1933, carries the headline "Library books Suffer from Depression on Basement Floor." There was no money with which to rebind them, and the floor was the only place to store them.

## Chapter VIII.

### FREEDOM AND CENSORSHIP

In the matter of censorship of books on the library shelves, only three cases have been recorded. In October 1910 the board instructed the librarian to withdraw from circulation A Hungry Heart by David Graham Phillips. Then in January 1940 came the heated controversy over John Steinbeck's Grapes of Wrath and Of Mice and Men. Councilmen William Meisel and Frank Piper, with their



attorney, Robert Brown, asked that the library board and "superintendent" be forced to remove the above books from the shelves. Their request was based on the contention that Grapes of Wrath was obscene, un-American, and Communistic. A public hearing, held on the third floor of the main building, brought out such a large crowd that there was standing room only for some people. Speaking for removal of the books were the two Councilmen, a Catholic priest, and a representative of the Hammond League of Civic Decency in addition to Attorney Brown. Spokesmen for the majority who opposed censorship or restriction of library books included three ministers of the gospel, a teacher at the Calumet Center of Indiana University, a student there, a representative of the Lake County Civil Liberties Committee, and two other interested citizens. The Hammond Library, as a result of this meeting, was allowed to keep the books provided that they be kept off the open shelves and not circulate to children. One favorable aspect of this controversy was that it gave the library more front-page publicity possibly than it had had since the day of the dedication of the Carnegie building.

In June 1963 the board adopted a written book selection policy which had been developed by the chief librarian with the assistance of the staff. Reference to this policy was helpful in October when representatives of the local funeral directors association attended a board meeting to protest the circulation by the library of The American Way of Death by Jessica Mitford and to donate other books on funeral customs in exchange for the removal of copies of the Mitford book. The board declined as a matter of established policy to remove a particular title. The other books on the subject were accepted subject to the policy on gifts, and the discussion ended amicably.

## Chapter IX.

### LIBRARY IN THE COMMUNITY

The chief librarians and staff members have been interested in participating in community activities as well as in their professional organizations: the American Library Association, the Indiana Library Association, and the district meetings of I.L.A. Three district meetings have been held here, in May 1930, June 1938, and the spring of 1953. Book review programs have been sponsored in cooperation with the Hammond Woman's Club, radio programs were given over the local station, WJOB, and Great Books discussion groups were held with Mr. Hayward as one of the leaders. For the children there have been Vacation Reading Clubs, "Lit'l Lis'ners," a dual program for pre-schoolers and parents, many book talks, story-telling, and instruction on the use of the library.

## Chapter X.

### LONG-TIME STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS

The library is an important factor in the cultural life of Hammond today through the efforts of the library boards, the chief librarians, and the faithful members of the staff. Many, many names have been on the list of staff members, but those who have given at least 20 years of full-time service deserve special mention. Marie Hansen Easter, previously mentioned, was on the staff for almost 31 years. Florence Allman came in 1925 after completing the Library Science course at Wisconsin University and working a year in the East Chicago Library, to be Head of the newly-created Catalog Department and part-time reference librarian. She held that position until her retirement in April 1961, a period of 36 years. Mrs. Ethel Seitz was the librarian at the Calumet Ave. Branch for 30 years, from 1922 to 1952. Gladys Zyp Ratke resigned in 1952 after 25 years in various capacities, 23 of those years being at the Rupp Branch.



\*Mary (Mrs. Walter) Wise gave 21 years of service as an assistant at Main and as a branch librarian. Alma (Mrs. Carl) Meyer was Head of Children's Work and the School Department for 23 years, retiring in the summer of 1952. In the fall of 1967 Sue Erickson retired from the library at Brooks House where she had served fourteen years as the branch librarian, unofficial staff member, and sympathetic counsellor to generations of children in the East Hammond community. Clara Louise Meyers, Children's Librarian at Main Library since 1945 retired in the summer of 1968. Successor to Gladys Ratke as librarian of Rupp Library was Elizabeth Gehrke who retired in March, 1969.

Present members of the staff who have reached the 20-years or over category are Mary Ruch, who has the distinction of the longest tenure, having worked at the Main Library as an assistant in the Catalog and Circulation Departments since February 1926; Fern Arnold, now Administrative Assistant to the Chief Librarian; Georgia Barnett, librarian at Keeler Branch and formerly at the Brooks House Branch; Marjorie Sohl, who heads the Division of Service to Adults and Young People; and Alice Fuzy, librarian at Sawyer Branch until 1966 when she became Head of the Circulation Department. Florence Cleveland has been Intra-loan librarian since 1949 and Louise Simmons was on the staff from 1928 to 1940 and again from 1961 to date.

Working conditions for the staff have improved through the years, especially with the authorization by the Board in 1951 to participate in the Indiana Public Employees Retirement Fund and, in 1955, to share in Social Security provided for by the Federal Government. Both the library and the employees contribute to these two funds. For a good many years staff members have been allowed to add the allotted two-weeks' sick leave to their vacation period if it has not been necessary to use it. In 1950, in recognition of Miss Allman's 25th anniversary with the library, by vote of the Board, all employees with 20 years' service were entitled thereafter to receive an extra week's vacation,

and those with 25 years were granted an extra two weeks, this being in addition to the two-weeks' sick leave allowance.

Public spirited citizens have served the unpaid and largely unrecognized role of library trustee, a number over a period of many years. Mr. Ralph Rupp was a trustee from 1919 to 1954 and served as President of the Board from 1929 to 1954. Mr. Lee Caldwell, Superintendent of Schools was a library board member from 1925 to 1942. Mrs. Oliver F. Campbell, a former professional librarian, served from 1948 to 1960. Mrs. E.S. Cooper was a trustee from 1935 to 1942 and was succeeded by her daughter, Mrs. Henry W. Eggers. Mr. John V. Keeler, for whom Keeler Branch is named was a trustee from 1920 to 1931. Mrs. O.C. Matthies, trustee from 1907 to 1911 and again from 1927 to 1939 was also active in national library trustee activity. Mrs. Daniel J. Moran, who was very active in educational and civic affairs in Hammond for many years, served as a trustee from 1919 to 1930. Dr. John J. Wadas succeeded Mr. Rupp and served until 1969. Present Board members who have served several terms on the Board are Mrs. Orville Umbaugh, Mrs. Lester F. Murphy, Mrs. Henry W. Eggers, Mr. M. Herbert Thorsen and Mr. John F. Wilhelm.

A tribute and grateful thanks is due these dedicated citizens of Hammond who have given so much time and thought to the work of the Library Board. Some have participated not only in the local work but also in that of the Trustee Division of the American Library Association and the Indiana Library Association.

## Chapter XI.

### CONSTRUCTION OF HOWARD BRANCH AND THE NEW MAIN LIBRARY by E.B. Hayward

The old Carnegie building built for a population of 20,000 was long recognized as inadequate and the need for a new central building was apparent for many years. The minutes of the Board meeting for November 4, 1943 contain the following entry:



"Mr. Rollis Weesner suggested that it might be a good policy for the Board to start thinking and planning for a new Central Building. This idea was wholeheartedly accepted by all members present, and Mr. Howard was instructed to prepare and suggest ideas to the Board from time to time at its future meetings."

By June 1953 negotiations were under way for a site owned by the Erie Railroad at Sohl Ave. and Carroll St., but the Board was finally informed that this land was not for sale. A questionnaire was distributed to patrons to sound out their preferences for a site. Sites preferred were Harrison Park, Indianapolis Blvd. and 169th St., and downtown Hammond. Some expressed a desire to have the library remain in Central Park. This was given some thought, but additional ground would not be released by the Park Board. Later, when this park was included in the Turner Park Urban Renewal Project and the building was scheduled to be demolished, it became a necessity to build elsewhere. In 1959 consideration was given to a site on the Purdue University Calumet Campus, but this not seeming feasible, it was decided in 1961 to purchase about 8 acres of land north of Waltham St. and east of Harrison Park owned by the Erie Railroad. The desirability of this site was questioned, and the need for a survey by experienced outsiders being felt, the firm of Library Building Consultants of Evanston, Illinois, was engaged for a study and recommendations.

At the same time that endeavors to obtain a new central library building were being made, there were developments in the south-east section of the city which made it advisable for the Library Board to decide how service to the growing population there was to be provided. There was some discussion of opening new public-school library branches in the Caldwell School and in other elementary schools to be constructed in south-east Hammond, but this plan was not carried out. Instead in September of 1961, the School Board agreed to transfer to the Library Board up to two acres of land in a suitable part of the plot at 169th Street and Grand Avenue for the construction of a public library branch.

The building program statement prepared by the Chief Librarian included the following recommendations:

"Because of the segmentation of Hammond by railroad lines, major arterial highways, and the Calumet River and the distribution of industrial, commercial and residential areas, good planning for public library service dictates that a major library facility be in each main area created by this segmentation. The proposed branch would be one of five primary service facilities immediately subordinate to the central headquarters library. Secondary branches dictated by the geography of Hammond would provide minimum reference service and extensive home reading service in the various neighborhoods.

The central headquarters library will procure and process all circulating and reference materials for the system, serve as a reservoir collection for all branches, house the major reference collection and the classroom libraries collection, circulate films and records, develop specialized subject departments, and house administrative offices.

The proposed branch library will serve as a circulating and reference library for persons of all ages in an area approximately two miles in circumference. Registration is expected to be about 5,000 within three years after service begins. If parts of the area east of Cline Avenue are annexed and built up or if more housing developments occur south of 169th Street, registration could reach 10,000. A book stock of approximately 33,500 volumes should be planned for."

The Board decided to finance the acquisition of land for the proposed new central building and the construction of the southeastern branch and the central building by means of a bond issue and the Library Improvement Reserve Fund. Stanley A. Tweedle was selected as the local attorney for the bond issue and the Chicago firm of Chapman and Cutler as the bond attorneys. Staff and Board members and other interested persons circulated petitions and obtained over two thousand signatures of Hammond property owners supporting the bond issue. Bonds in the amount of \$1,800,000 were sold on September 30, 1964 at an interest rate of 3.2%.

The two most desirable sites for a central building according to the recommendations of Library Building Consultants would be at a location as close as possible to the corner of Hohman Avenue and State Street or as close as possible to the corner of Indianapolis and 165th Street. They also recommended a building with eighty thousand square feet of floor area and provision for at least



• seventy-five parking spaces with other public parking nearby. The Board was having an available site at Hohman Avenue and Russell Street appraised, but this was much smaller than would be necessary if these recommendations were to be followed.

At about this time Libby Posner Marcus, Realtor, contacted Mrs. Murphy and Mrs. Eggers of the Library Board concerning land partly occupied by the old State Street Theatre near Sohl Avenue on State and Sibley Streets. The Board had this site investigated and appraised and after various negotiations which included condemnation proceedings in connection with the actual portion occupied by the theatre and the purchase of two old houses, 66,201 square feet of land was acquired at a total cost of \$205,837.

The James A. Howard Branch Library was dedicated Sunday afternoon June 26, 1966. The library was named in honor of James Alonzo Howard, Chief Librarian from 1929 to 1954. The architect was L. Cosby Bernard, son of the architect who designed Hansen, Rupp and Sawyer branch libraries. James Hornak of this firm was assigned to design the building. Jane Miles selected the colors and furnishings.

Mrs. Orville Umbaugh, Past President of the Library Board presided at the dedication ceremonies and open house. It was a hot sunny afternoon but the air conditioning made the colorful interior inviting and the beverages and cookies furnished by the Parent Teacher Association of the neighboring schools were rapidly consumed. Stereophonic music was provided by Vierk's Furniture Store and the meeting room walls were hung with paintings loaned by local artists.

The dedication program opened with an invocation by Reverend John T. Brumfield, Minister at the Cline Gardens Christian Church and a welcome by Cordell Pinkerton, City Attorney representing the Mayor. Robert McClarren, Director of the Indiana State Library, was the principal speaker. Among the guests present was Mrs. James A. Howard. The keys to the building were presented to Mrs.

George W. Houser, the first librarian of the Howard Branch by Martin Snemis, Treasurer of the Remy Company, the major contractor for the building. Katherine Freeman Benne, a member of the Library Board wrote a poem especially for the occasion, The Flight of the Phoenix, inspired by the patio sculpture by Clyde Ball.

The committee which planned the dedication program consisted of Mrs. Orville Umbaugh, Mrs. Virgil James, Mrs. John Zneimer, Mrs. Kermit Clyne, Miss Fern Arnold, Mrs. Cordell Pinkerton, and Mr. Edward Hayward.

The James A. Howard Branch Library occupies an acre and a half of ground which slopes gently to parkways on 170th Street to the south and 169th Street to the west. A parking lot with thirty-two spaces is bordered with a strip of grass and trees on the east. There is a front entrance to a vestibule with display cases and an entrance from the patio on the north in the corner formed by the L shaped building. A low wall protects the small gardens and the Phoenix sculpture in the patio. The adult and children's areas are one large rectangular room demarked only by shelving islands and carpeted areas. The reading room has a capacity of thirty-thousand books and regular seating for sixty readers at tables and study carrels. Features of the children's area are the shelving with dividers for children's books, stools with detachable cushions and a "flying saucer" lounge which provide additional seating for story hours. Casual seating next to the magazine shelves and a large picture window looking out on the patio are a feature of the adult area. The group activities room has audience type seating for eighty persons. After hours book return slots are adjacent to each entrance. An attractive staff room is large enough for small group meetings and a room behind the charging desk serves as the librarian's office and circulation work room.

Construction contracts for the new central building were awarded on January 27, 1966. Work began on February 10th with the demolition of the old



•theatre.

The building was designed by August J. Ignelzi from programs prepared by the Chief Librarian assisted by the Staff and by Library Building Consultants, Inc. Interior design and color selection was by Jane Miles. Walter Mybeck was Resident Engineer until his death on November 23rd after which his duties were performed by Edwin Hanford. The major construction contractors were Superior Construction Company, Hyre Electric Company, T. F. Hanley Corporation (Heating and Ventilating) and Van Gorp-Dedelow Company (Plumbing). Major furniture contractors were Herman Miller Company, Estey Company, and Weinberg Company.

(quote from 1967 Annual Report)

The move to the spacious and beautiful new structure was made during the week of June 23, 1967 which was mercifully cool. Books, magazines and supplies were packed in boxes by library employees and transported by the movers along with equipment to areas designated. After much sorting and rearrangement, a complete inventory was taken of adult and juvenile collections. Main Library reopened its doors to the public on September 5th.

Employed at Main Library at about this time were the following: Edward B. Hayward, Chief Librarian. Fern Arnold, Administrative Assistant. Marjorie Sohl, Head Adult Division. Annabel McKinney, Head Children's Division. Alice Fuzy, Head Circulation Department. Louise Simmons, Popular Library. Carol Clark, Reference. Isabelle Liehe, Student Room. Florence Cleveland, Intra-library loans. Joyce Kielbowicz, Clara Louise Myers, Children's Library. Mary Ruch, Winifred Barnett, Dorothy Sanderson, Doris Leas, Myrna Crawther, Mary Suttinger, Acquisitions & Cataloging. Julianna Peto, Betty Brown, Laura Frevert, Betty Kelley, Irene Hammond, Juanita Hunter, Beatrice Schmidt, Madge Timkovich, Roger Vinson, Circulation. Betty Burton, Carol Whitmer, Business Office. Susan Mansker, Receptionist. Jacob Roquet, Display. Robert O. Hines, Maintenance. Stanley Kocel, Jesse Lara, Hester Cannon, Janitorial. Tony Negovetich, Driving. Nadine James, Tom and LaMae Nelson, Jane Bruhn, Bonita Cross, Classroom Library Service. Martha Yoder, Mary Butkovich, Karen Yoder, Madge Timkovich, Theresa Lanham, Pamela Sudac, Sally Ann Bola, Carol Bruhn, Ursula Kalwinski, Karen Kicho, Helen Los, Faye Rhyne, Student Assistants.

The raising of the American Flag presented to the library by VFW post 802 heralded a week of celebration marking the advent of the new Main Library. Downtown Hammond merchants ran full page advertisements in the Hammond Times featuring pictures of the new building and inviting citizens to tour the library throughout the week. News articles also appeared each day reporting on the many events of the week. Banners and streamers flew over State Street and from the porticos at the main entrances. Tickets obtained at the library could be deposited in stores along State Street for a prize drawing which was held at the library on the last day of the celebration. An illustrated brochure was printed and distributed to visitors.

The high school bands of Hammond and other musical groups gave concerts during the week starting with a folk singing group from Hammond Technical High School. The Hammond Exchange Club presented the "Freedom Shrine," a set of mounted facimiles of documents of American history. The Hammond Kiwanis Club met for luncheon in the Community Room and presented "The Blue Cat of Castle~~ton~~ton," memorial to Herbert L. Wilhelm. Paintings by Michael Daumer were presented by the Hammond Intermediate Woman's Club and hung in the Adult Department.

Throngs of Hammond citizens filled the main floor for the program of dedication on Tuesday evening October 24th as a high wind and rain lashed the outside. Of the ceremonies presided over by Library Board President, Esther Eggers, the Hammond Times said:

"Dr. Preston Bradley in a stirring address... told of his love for books which dates back to his childhood in a small Michigan village...He urged parents to see that their children learn to love books...He said there can be no great moral society until man develops great spiritual sensitivity. He said hope lives only in a true culture, one which respects our differences.

Mr. Bradley joined others in lauding the beauty of the new library. 'Somebody had a vision' he said.

Cordell Pinkerton, City Attorney who represented Mayor Edward C. Dowling, called the library..."a wonderful edifice. It is beautiful, wonderful, magnificent...a landmark which will enrich the community."



• Presentation of the building was made for the Architect by August L. Ignelzi, Partner in the firm of Bessozzi, Carpenter & Ignelzi; for the contractors by Elio Largura, President of Superior Construction Company; and for the community by John F. Wilhelm, President of the Hoosier State Bank and Vice-President of the Library Board. Mr. Hayward accepted custody of the library on behalf of the staff.

The Hammond High School Band provided music for the dedication program. The invocation was given by Msgr. Vincent Lengerich, Pastor of St. Joseph Parish. The benediction was given by the Reverend John Colsten, Associate Pastor of the First Baptist Church.

After the program, guided tours of the building were conducted by library staff members and refreshments were served by members of the library staff.

The dedication brochure describes the new Main Library as a structure classical in design and contemporary in spirit. With the opening of these two modern, functional libraries, the Hammond Public Library embarked upon a new era of service to the citizens of Hammond.

## TRUSTEES

The following public-spirited citizens have served on the Board of Trustees without financial remuneration:

Rev. T.H. Adams.....	1918-19
Miss Rena Ames.....	1903-05
Mr. David W. Beach.....	1926-31
Mr. Lawrence Becker.....	1903-15
Mr. W.C. Belman.....	1919-20
Mrs. Michael G. Benne.....	1964-66
Mr. Stephen J. Biel.....	1937-45
Mr. L.L. Bomberger.....	1918-19
Mrs. George W. Boswell.....	1960-64
Mrs. Porter Brandenburg.....	1934-35
Dr. W. Burton.....	1903
Mr. L.L. Caldwell.....	1925-42
Mrs. Oliver F. Campbell.....	1948-60
Rev. Theodore E. Claus.....	1921-26
Mrs. Grace R. Conroy.....	1921-23
Mrs. E.S. Cooper.....	1935-42
Mrs. Henry W. Eggers.....	1943-
Mr. David T. Emery.....	1919-22
Mrs. Nicholas Emmerling.....	1905-06
Mrs. M.L. Eversole.....	1935-42
Mrs. W.H. Gostlin.....	1923-27
Mrs. Mary T. Holm.....	1907-11
Dr. W.F. Howat.....	1903-19
Mrs. Emma Huehn.....	1929-33
Mrs. J.G. Ibach.....	1903-11
Rev. John Paul Jones.....	1942-47
Mrs. Raymond L. Kandalec.....	1968-
Mrs. Albert P. Kaufman.....	1968
Mr. J.V. Keeler.....	1920-31
Mrs. T.W. Kohr.....	1913-20
Rev. M.H. Krauss.....	1919-20
Mrs. W.J. McAleer.....	1926-28
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Mr. F.D. McElroy.....	1915-19
Mr. Milton McKay.....	1930-32
Mrs. O.C.E. Matthies, 1907-11;.....	1927-39
Mrs. D.J. Moran.....	1919-30
Mrs. Lester F. Murphy.....	1939-
Mr. Percy A. Parry.....	1914-18
Rev. H.M. Plaster.....	1911-15
Mr. Warren A. Reeder, Jr.....	1969-
Mrs. J.F. Reilly.....	1912-19
Mrs. Walter Rice.....	1935-39
Mrs. F.O. Rick.....	1919-24
Mr. Roy Rogers.....	1931-35
Mrs. T. Hunton Rogers.....	1934-37
Mrs. M. Rothschild.....	1911-19
Mr. R.G. Rupp.....	1919-54
Mrs. Jeanie L. Sawyer.....	1925-26
Dr. Eleanore Scull.....	1903-07
Rev. Charles A. Smith, 1907-10;.....	1913-14
Dr. G.L. Smith.....	1932-33



Mr. M.H. Thorsen.....	1946-
Mrs. J.W. Townsend.....	1930-34
Mr. A. Murray Turner.....	1903-07
Mrs. J.M. Turner.....	1911-12
Mrs. Orville Umbaugh.....	1940-
Dr. John J. Wadas.....	1954-69
Mr. Rollis Weesner.....	1942-46
Mr. Frederick A. Wilhelm.....	1923-24
Mr. John F. Wilhelm.....	1946-
Mr. Albert J. Zimmerman.....	1945-46

#### CHIEF LIBRARIANS

Miss Marie Hansen, Jan. 1, 1904-Sept. 30, 1906 (2 years, 8 months)  
 Mrs. Jeanie L. Sawyer, Oct. 1, 1906-Dec. 31, 1924 (18 years, 3 months)  
 Mr. Orlando C. Davis, Jan. 1, 1925-May 30, 1926 (1 year, 5 months)  
 Mr. Albert R. Nichols, June 16, 1926-Dec. 31, 1928 (2 years, 6½ months)  
 Mr. James A. Howard, Jan. 1, 1929-Apr. 28, 1954 (25 years, 3 months)  
 Mr. Edward B. Hayward, Aug. 1, 1954-

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

History of the Hammond Public Library, prepared by James A. Howard.  
 Two scrapbooks located in the Calumet Room, Main Library.  
 Miscellaneous typed material in Business Office file.  
 Minutes of the Board meetings from Jan. 16, 1903, to Oct. 14, 1965  
 (with the exception of minutes from Aug. 24, 1929, to and in-  
 cluding Feb. 10, 1931, which were stolen with other material  
 from the office safe in Feb. 1931).  
 Annual reports of the Hammond Public Library 1925-1968.  
 Building program statement (for proposed South-East Branch Library),  
 prepared by Edward B. Hayward.  
 Program for a New Main Library Building, prepared by Edward B. Hayward.

## Pictures on File

Main Library Building 1906-1967 (Scrapbook)

Main Library Building 1967

James A. Howard, Chief Librarian 1929-1954

Keeler Branch Library 1969

Lincoln Branch Library 1969

Hansen Branch Library c. 1954

Harrison Park Branch Library 1969

Sawyer Branch Library 1968

Riley Branch Library 1969

Rupp Branch Library 1969

Wilson Branch Library 1969

Howard Branch Library 1966, 1969

Jefferson Branch Library 1969

Old Main, Interior 1967 Clark & Sohl at Circulation Desk

Summer Day at Old Main c. 1956 Jacqueline Ettling at Desk

Brooks House 1969

Brooks House Library in the 20's

Dunes Painting - Allman, Myers, Howard, Arnold

Library Board

1952 Wilhelm, Rupp, Thorsen, Eggers, Umbaugh, Murphy (absent, Campbell)

1964 Thorsen, Wadas, Benne, Eggers, Murphy, Umbaugh, Wilhelm, Hayward  
(At Howard Branch)

1967 Thorsen, Umbaugh, Wilhelm, Eggers, Hayward, Benne, Wadas

1969 Front row: Arnold, Kandalec, Umbaugh, Murphy, Eggers. Back  
row: Hayward, Thorsen, Reeder, Wilhelm

Edward B. Hayward, Chief Librarian 1954-

Main Library 1967-

Pictures of furniture layout by Jane Miles

Circulation and Registration Desk - Clark, Simmons, Fuzy, Timkovich



Popular Library

Second Floor, North

Student Reading Area

First Floor Center

Meeting Room

Children's Room

Story Hour Alcove